



THE TIMETABLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
ILLINOIS VALLEY DIVISION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



Volume 44, No. 5, November 2025

WEBSITE: nmra-ivd.org

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Failure IS an option.....

In Gene Kranz's book "Failure is not an option", he tells the true story of Apollo 13, the seventh mission to the moon and what would have been the third moon landing. It lifted off on April 11, 1970 and two days later, already on its way to the moon an explosion occurred which crippled the spacecraft and put the lives of the three astronauts in serious jeopardy. Losing patience with the nay sayers in the control room, actor Ed Harris, who played the role of Flight Director Gene Kranz in the movie, announced in no uncertain terms that "failure is not an option" and for the next 4 days the world watched and hoped as NASA teams cobbled together an unorthodox plan against all odds that successfully returned the astronauts to earth safely.

After their return, Apollo 13 came to be known as an example of a "successful failure" where an unexpected problem came along that couldn't be resolved by simply referring to the instruction manual. Instead, it was human ingenuity and thinking outside the box that saved the day. For instance, as the movie tells it, the best use for the instruction manual was to tear off the cover and use it to help fabricate an enclosure that would fit non-standard air filters to keep the astronauts from dying of carbon dioxide poisoning.

Thankfully we don't have life or death situations in model railroading when problems arise but we have all experienced failures in our modeling efforts from time to time that require rethinking and maybe even tearing up entire parts of our layout and starting over. I can certainly attest to this, and as my wife frequently reminds me, my natural response is to initially go negative and throw in the towel instead of simply slowing down, taking a deep breath, and trying to move

forward in the hope I won't make the same mistake again.

Dale Carnegie, the American writer who wrote and taught self-improvement, communication, and interpersonal skills, once said that "discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success". I agree wholeheartedly with this statement because if we never fail, we lose valuable opportunities for improvement. In this sense, is it not accurate to say that failure IS an option?

Gary Baker

IVD Superintendent

ICC Train Fare—Sunday November 16, 2025 10AM to 3 PM

\$3 at the door

An announcement will be made as to the IVD traveling layout being there.

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Year listed with title indicates the end of present term.

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Upcoming 2025 IVD Meetings

Membership Meetings:

Unless noted otherwise, meetings are held on the third Saturday of January, March, May, September and November at a branch of the Peoria Public Library, Peoria. Doors open at 12 noon for a time of fellowship. A \$3.00 donation is welcomed by members which qualifies each donor participation in the door prize drawing.

NOVEMBER MEETING

The November Meet will be on the 15th at the old Amtrak station in Normal, 100 Parkinson Street.

Meet will be from 1-4 PM. Doors open at noon.

Confirmed clinic by Ed Brown with a second clinic in the works but tentative as of today.

No layout tours are confirmed yet but like Peck Park we'll have lots of full size trains to see during the meet.

Board of Directors Meetings:

The next Board of Directors Meeting, will be Monday October 20, 2025, 6:30 pm by ZOOM. Members who wish to attend need to contact Gary Baker, Superintendent, at the email address listed to the left of this page to receive the ZOOM invitation.

2025-2026 Popular Vote Contests

May:

Buildings Off-Line
MOW Cars, Vehicles and Equipment

September:

Photos from a Layout
Specialty Railroad Cars, Non-MOW

November: Passenger Cars Bridges

January:

Scenery, any season
Photos of prototype railroading

March

Scratchbuilding, any category
Kitbash, any category

May

Freight Cars
On Line Dioramas

Dollar Store Weathering

by Roger Kujawa

It can be hard to consider dirtying up your expensive cars and locos. Weathering your models is one thing I think makes them look more realistic. I went to the Dollar Store and pick up a variety of eye shadow and makeup. I stayed away from the bright colors and anything with glitter in it. The expression on the lady in the checkout line was priceless after I smiled her. The checker was speechless.

My goal is not to super detail my weathering, but get some rust and dust on the fleet. I'm not spending much more than 5 to 8 minutes a car. I have a lot of cars to do. Special weathering can be done later.

I have been doing this for some time and still learn new things. I'd consider using some old cars or picking up some cheap cars at a train show. The first step was to flat coat the item. A flat coat takes away the new car shine and gives the makeup something to stick to. I picked up a variety of cheap stuff paint brushes and use some for light colors, others for rusty colors and some others for the dark colors. Most of the makeup also comes with sponge brushes which are also useful.

Weathering is messy. I wear some cheap lightweight gloves and an apron.

What I like about the makeup is that it is mostly removable. With a wet paper towel or Q Tip you can get most of it off. Sometimes putting on the weathering on and wiping it off leaves dirt in the cracks and by the ribs which is a great look.

The makeup is a lot more durable than plain chalks which can require a clear coat to seal them. I don't clear coat my make up weathered cars.

Photos are a great resource to see how the dirt gathers on a car. Cars from different regions can have different colors and patterns. The commodity the car carries can also leak onto the car and trucks. Gravity pretty much pulls the weathering down the car unless splashed up from the wheels or wind.

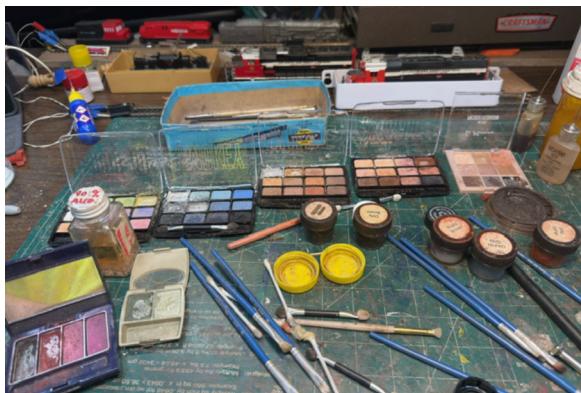
You can also put some of the makeup in a milk cap and add some water or alcohol and paint with it. It gives a different look. This "paint" is a lot harder to get off. I have also used some hand cream to create a thick mixture for stippling around covered hopper hatches simulating spillage. I hope you try some weathering. It is not exclusive to rolling equipment. Buildings and roads get dirty also.

Have fun. Watch some videos. Experiment.

Roger Kujawa



Long time NMRA member and Midwest Convention contest judge Gary Children has passed away. He was a WISE Division member and past board member of both the WISE Division and Midwest Division. He was also active with Badgerland S gaugers, Operation Lifesavers and his church.



GEAR JAMMER?

by

Larry Nelson

I grew up in Canton, Illinois. My first memories of "Gear Jammers," one of the oldest hot rod clubs in The United States, were a really fantastic bunch of guys with fast, neat looking hot rod cars. I was young and could only dream of the things those older guys were building. Gear jamming back then signified drag racing and running through the gears as fast as you could. I think that was what got me started building model cars. AMT made some 1/24 scale car kits that sold for one dollar. I would beg my mother for a dollar every time we went to Peoria to shop. Hobby Models was just down the street from the big department stores. My neighbor, John, would often go along, and we headed straight to Hobby Models. We spent the next couple hours looking over the selection of model cars, planes, ships, and trains. Those were the days!

I need to get back to the subject, jammed gears. In model railroading, jammed gears is not near as much fun. Many of us have experienced a locomotive that stopped running or started running very erratically. One of the most common causes of this problem is a split drive gear. In this article I am going to show you how to correct this problem easily.

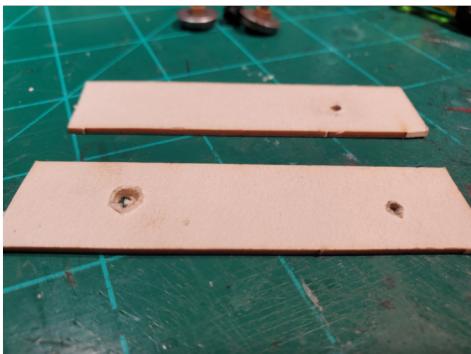
This problem may have never happened to you, but it can happen to one of your favorite locomotives when you least expect it. To diagnose this problem is a very simple solution. First, you need to be aware that this is a common problem in some older diesel locomotives. You can easily check if this is the problem without tearing apart the locomotive. Turn the engine upside down, check the wheels by holding one wheel, and check to see if the opposite wheel can move. If it moves a little without moving the wheel that you are holding, you have a split drive gear. This gear needs to be replaced! I make it a general practice to change all of the wheel's drive gears if one or more are bad. (If one or more are bad, the rest will soon follow.)

There are two ways to correct this problem. Your options are the expensive way and the cheaper way. The expensive way is easy. You just purchase new wheel sets with gears already installed. Remove the gear case cover and remove the defective wheel set, drop in the new wheel set, oil the new bearings and gear, and replace the cover. Make sure you purchase the correct wheel set for your locomotive. This is quick and somewhat expensive. The second option is somewhat more difficult, but will save you some money. Most people think of me as being cheap. I like to think that I am frugal. Sometimes being frugal has its drawbacks! The rest of this article will show how I overcome the frustration of putting a new gear on the wheel set.

Step one is to remove the offending wheel set or sets from the locomotive. The drive axles are two parts connected in the center by the drive gear. Pull the wheels apart and remove the split gear. That was easy enough. Now comes the fun part! How do I replace the new gear on the axle? Back when I was young and strong I had tough fingers and a strong grip. Like a bull in the china shop, I could sometimes force that gear onto the axle. Ha! Ha! If it were easy, anyone could do it. I have learned over the years that making a simple jig can save a lot of time and frustration. I have a small work bench vise which will make pushing the gear onto the axle much easier than trying to push it on with my 80 year old fingers. The problem is how do you align the axle and the gear and tighten the vise at the same time without spending the next few hours hunting for the dropped parts?

It is time for that simple jig. The problem that needs to be solved is one of alignment. The parts want to flop to one side or the other. My solution is quick, easy and cheap. There is that word "cheap" again. I should have said frugal! There are two causes for the alignment problem. On the wheel axle the wheel doesn't set flat against the vise jaw. On the gear side the gear doesn't set flat against the other jaw. To remedy this problem I went to my scrap pile and found a couple small pieces of scrap matte board. I could have done the same thing with scrap pieces of styrene or bass wood. This doesn't have to be pretty. The small hole fits the end of the axle. The large hole fits the gear. You will notice that the one has a large and a small hole. The small hole will be used in the last step. Place the end of the axle into the small hole and the end of the gear into the large hole. You will notice that I made these pieces long enough so that I can hold the parts in place without having my fingers between the vise jaws.

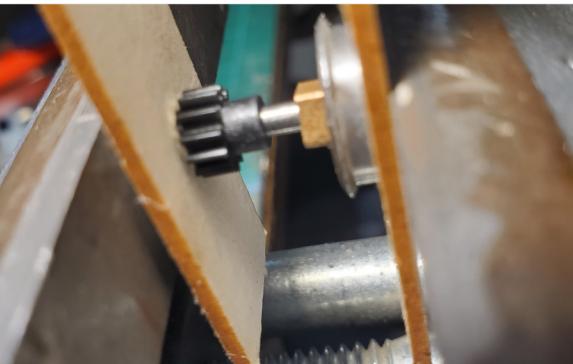
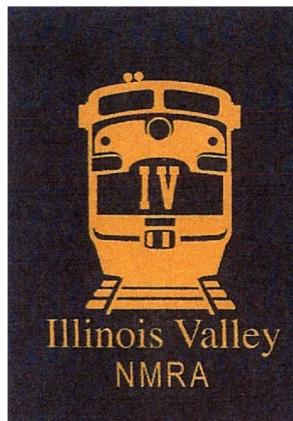
Place one axle and the gear in alignment between the vise jaws. Make sure that the bronze bearing is on the axle before you press on the gear. If you forget the bearing, you will have a whole new problem. Don't ask me how I know! I like to get the axle and gear started and then add the axle to the other side. Now is when you need the small hole on the piece that held the gear previously. Align and place the axles and gear into the vise. **Make sure that both bearings are in place before proceeding!** Place everything back into the vise. Make sure everything is properly aligned and gently begin to tighten the vise. Remove the setup often and check the wheel gauge in the NMRA HO standard gauge. Pay special attention to the wheel bearings. You can easily tighten one side too tight and freeze the wheel bearing. If I see one side getting too tight I insert a shim between the wheel and the bearing so that it doesn't get any tighter. When the wheels are in gauge both bearings should turn freely. Notice the knife blade between the wheel and the bearing to hold it from getting too tight while the opposite side is finished. When you are satisfied with the wheel gauge and free turning bearings, it is time to oil the bearings and gear lightly. Place the assembly back into the truck making sure that the bearings are seated properly. Replace the cover plate and you should have a fine running locomotive. Have fun and show me what you have been building.



IVD NMRA APPAREL 2025

For some time there has been a request for the availability of IVD green T-shirts and other apparel. The previous outlet for these items could be acquired through the Locker Room in Spring Valley, Illinois. When contacted, they could not find the patterns to

make the shirts. Therefore the IVD BoD looked into possible providers in the Peoria area and looked into a new logo for the shirts. A provider in Washington was chosen and a new logo was picked after a long, long discussion. After these decisions were made, the pattern produced and paid for and a few shirts made, the Locker Room reported that they had found their patterns. Therefore, members who wish to order the older logo style can still get them through the Locker Room. The new shirts are dark green with a bright yellow logo.



Jeff Deasy is the genius behind the very much improved *Timetable* in this second edition with me as editor. He took it on himself to pull the pdf version of a previous newsletter into the Affinity software we chose to publish the newsletter. I would have never thought of that as my mind was locked into other pathways.

Thank you, Jeff for jumping bunches of hurdles.

Mike Shockley



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UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MODEL RAILROADERS

Great Midwest Train Show, Sunday, December 7, 2025, January 4, 2026, February 1, March 1, April 12, May 3, June 7, August 2, September 13, October 4, November 1, December 6. DuPage County Fair Grounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, Illinois. The show is scheduled for the first Sunday of each month of 2025 (except no show in July), 9 am to 3 pm. Admission \$8, online \$7, and children under 11 free. Free parking and handicapped accessible.

Illinois Valley Division Meet, Saturday, November 15, 2025 1:00 pm to 3:15 pm, Old Amtrak Depot, 100 Parkinson Street, Normal, IL Doors open at 12:15 \$3 donation accepted.

2026 Galesburg Scale Train Show, stay tuned!

NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION, nmra2026.org. Scenic City Express, Chattanooga Marriott Downtown/Convention Center, Chattanooga, TN, July 27-August 2, 2026.

2026 Midwest Region Convention. There will be no region convention since the National Convention will be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

34th Annual Rail Fair, Saturday, July 18, 2026, Onalaska Omni Center, 255 Riders Club Road, Onalaska, Wisconsin, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Admission \$8.00, children under 12 free with an adult.

Sherman Scale Train Show, Sunday, October 19, 2025, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, 300 South First Street, Sherman, Illinois. Admission \$5, Children Under 10 free. Early Bird Admission Option is \$10:00 at 9:00 am.. Scale trains only. Free parking and handicapped accessible.

The Great Tri State Rail Sale, Saturday, January 24, 2026, 9 AM to 3 PM at The La Crosse Center, 2nd & Pearl Streets, LaCrosse, Wisconsin. \$8 admission. Under 12 free with adult.

2026 Annual Train Show & Sap Meet, Saturday, January 31, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Sunday, February 1, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm 2026, Berndes Center, Jones County Fairgrounds, 766 N. Maple Street, Monticello, Iowa. Admission \$5.00, under 12 free w/adult.

Great Train Show, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis IN February 7-8, 2026 10AM to 4PM www.greattrainshow.com

Southern Illinois Model Train Meet February 7, 2026, 9AM to 3PM, The Pavillion, Marion, Illinois

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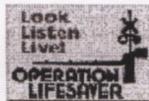
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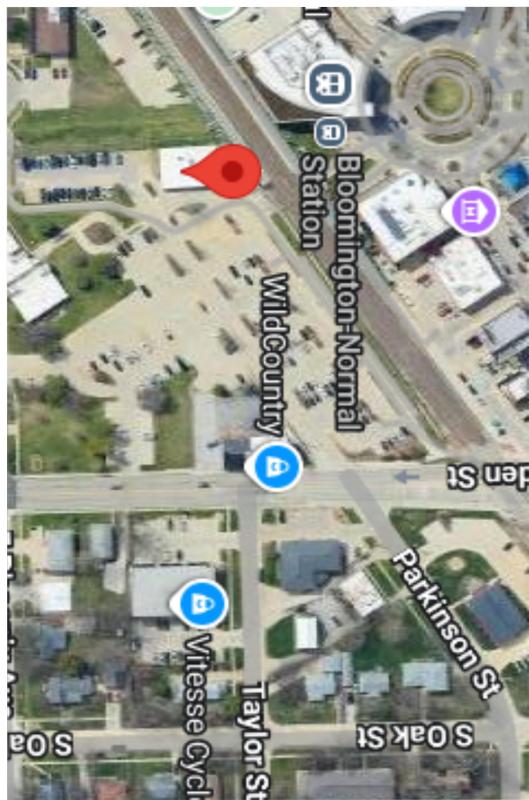
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November 15, 2025

Illinois Valley Division of the NMRA

Division Meeting

The Old Amtrak station in Normal,
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Meet will be from 1-4 PM. Doors open at noon.

Clinics: Ed Brown and TBA

Contests:

- (1) Passenger Cars
- (2) Bridges

